Letter from Taizé

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Letter from Ethiopia

Before the European Meeting of young adults held in Rome from 28th December 1987 to 2nd January 1988, Brother Roger went to Ethiopia with two of his brothers. That country is under the threat of famine. In Rome, 24,000 young adults from all over Europe were welcomed by the young people of the parishes of the city and surrounding region. Among the participants 5,000 were from Eastern Europe including, for the first time ever, a thousand from Hungary. The Letter from Ethiopia will be referred to during the year of 1988. It is best read in parts with plenty of time for reflection rather than rapidly. The 33 weeklong, Intercontinental Youth Meetings, to be held at Taizé from 20th March to 6th November 1988, will be partly based on this letter (young people from 97 different countries took part in these intercontinental meetings when they began in 1987).

Wherever you are in the world, in the face of so many innocent people marked by suffering, will you seek the vitality of an inner life so as to be present to the wounds of the human family?

Be bewildered or even disillusioned, you let yourself drift into indifference to the invisible presence of Christ within you... Who will clear the path of the wellsprings of life for you? Who will reveal to you the secret of a freshness that is always new : God present for every human being?

Can you perceive it? Can you discern it? When your night becomes dark, God's love is a fire.[1] Perhaps the fire is under the ashes and no longer gives light. Perhaps, overcome by doubt, you are asking yourself: But where is God? Could he remain silent?

The Spirit of the One who is Risen is always in you; he is never absent from your life.[2] Knowing this is enough to keep us wakeful. And your night is transpierced by humble trusting in him.

Wonder of a love without beginning or end... You will surprise yourself by saying:

Jesus, the Risen One, was in me, there, where no one is, like anyone else – yet I didn't feel him at all. So often I looked for him elsewhere. As long as I was fleeing the living springs he had set in the hollow of my being, run as I might across the earth, to go far, very far, I was going astray on paths that lead nowhere. A joy in God remained impossible to find. ▷

1. "You are all children of the light and children of the day" (1 Thessalonians 5.5). Some Christians from Asia have found a symbol which expresses very well the fire which never dies out; it is something that can easily be adopted by people in other parts of the world. At the start of common prayer in the evening, some young people or children come forward holding tapers and go to light an oil lamp placed on a stand. Meanwhile, everyone sings a hymn or chant that celebrates the light of Christ.

2. God dwells in every human being from birth. In an encyclical, Pope John Paul II explains that Christ is united with every human being without exception, even if they are not aware of it (*Redemptor Hominis*).

A TELEGRAM FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Dear Brother Roger,
As you bring together in the eternal city thousands of young people, mainly from Europe, in order to unite their prayers and re-affirm their will to struggle in favour of peace and reconciliation, I want to greet this new stage of the «pilgrimage of trust on earth» which your community has animated with so much success for several years.

Through you, I would like to say to all these young people that at the United Nations, we feel comforted and encouraged by this vast movement of solidarity. May they know that our thoughts are with them as their prayers rise up under the vaults of these fine Roman basilicas which could not be better chosen for this end of the year European Meeting.

Javier Perez de Cuellar
Secretary-General, United Nations Organisation.

But the time came when I discovered that Christ had never left me. I still did not dare to speak to him,[3] yet he already understood me, already he was speaking to me. Baptism had been the mark of an invisible presence. When the veil of doubt lifted, trust of faith came and enlightened even my night.

How much more does life blossom out "when dawn breaks and the morning star rises in our hearts."[4]

God expects much of you. He never leads you to the dizziness of discouragement where you would only have sadness to offer. He is leading you towards realities that dissolve bitterness.

God expects much of you; and you think you have almost nothing to respond with. But he is offering you the chance of creating with very little: just like Mary who was poor and accomplished everything with simple means.

God wants to keep you humble, and yet give you a heart that is very wide, yes a catholicity of heart. With almost nothing, you will be one of those who bring comfort in the trials of the human family.[5] With almost nothing, you will be a creator in the mystery of communion that is the Church.[6]

And since nothing vast can be accomplished without an inner life, you cannot forget to go to draw from the wellsprings.[7]

You wonder sometimes: But where are these wellsprings of an inner life?

Happy those who advance, not by sight, but by the trust of faith.[8]

When you are searching for the wellsprings, even in your night, the thirst of a trusting brings light within. And you want to say to God: "Listen to my prayer, the prayer of a child. Help me to entrust all things to you at every moment. I so much want to find my joy in your continual presence."

3. In prayer, we can talk in great simplicity with God, with Christ and with the Holy Spirit. And in the same simplicity of heart we can say to those who have gone before us into God's presence: Pray for me. Their prayers have counted in our life. How could we stop trusting in their prayer when they die?

4. cf. 2 Peter 1.19

5. After the consideration that has been given to the six questions concerning the United Nations, Brother Roger will go in the Spring, with five children from the five continents, to take some suggestions to the Secretary-General, Mr. Perez de Cuellar. The UN exists, and it can provide a basis for peace. For it is in effect the first time in human history that we have the beginnings of a world political body, a vital possibility for meeting and discussion. We should like to awaken people's attention to the UN. such attention can promote changes to help it forsee and prevent political risks more effectively, and to ensure economic cooperation between governments, particularly between rich and poor.

6. In the communion of the Church Christ comes to awaken us from a sleep, to refresh our body and our spirit that so often forget the essential God-given values for holding fast. There is a complementarity in the communion that the Church is. When one person gives way, others are there to support them on their way towards God. What one person does not understand of the mystery of faith, another is able to grasp.

7. "I shall guide them to streams of water, by a smooth path where they will not stumble. For I am a father to my people" (Jeremiah 31.9). "Joyfully you will draw water from the springs of salvation" (Isaiah 12.3).

8. cf. 2 Corinthians 5.7. "Blessed is she who believed that the promise made her by God would be fulfilled" Elizabeth says to Mary.

If only I could put my hand on your shoulder and guide you into the path of trusting in God. You would discover there something beyond your hopes: in God, joy and peace of heart are one.

When, in times of difficulty, your thoughts become confused, essential is the peace of heart that enables you turn towards Jesus, the Risen One.

Yes, the Holy Spirit breathes peace into you. He wants to fill you with a joy of the Gospel, a joy that endures even in times of incomprehensible trial. [9] The Spirit opens up oases within you. Even if what you are going through is scarcely imaginable, you are able to resist the anguish that assails you, to resist the dread of what threatens and the fear of the death of those you love. [10]

God never wants anguish; he burns the ill within us.

If you allow bitterness to gain such a hold on you that you reject the spirit of forgiveness, what will you have left with which to build yourself up within?

And if your neighbour refuses reconciliation, it is not by your worrying about it that the miracle will take place in them, but by persevering in trust. [11]

There is a happiness that wells up for those who dare to live a life of forgiveness because of Christ and the Gospel. Not a happiness sought for its own sake, which has already gone when we think we are taking hold of it, but the happiness that is offered to those who turn to God in all simplicity of heart. [12]

Within you, the valley of tears is going to become a place of living springs, a springtime of the heart. [13] There you are, set free to be inventive, free to look on things with wonder and with poetry... free to love life and to see existence on this earth as the dawn of a life that will never end...

You want to follow Christ and you are wondering: How can I discover the will of his love, on earth as in heaven?

Do you hear the resonance of his voice within you? – Come, I will give you somewhere to rest your heart, come and follow me. ▷

. "Not my peace, but your peace", e can say to Christ. He did not hide om his disciples the fact that they ould face trials. When he says, Peace I leave you", he adds: "My eace I give you", the peace that mains even when fears arise within nd around us (John 14.27).

0. Why is so little attention given to e words of the Apostle Paul which firm that, on this earth, we have ready been raised up from the dead ith Christ (Colossians 2.12; 3.1)? At e moment when we close our eyes r the last time on earth, we shall nter into the fullness of the Kingdom f eternity, but the resurrection has ready begun.

1. The tempter's only aim is to ake us lose trust. So we would like o say to Christ: "You experienced mptation as we all do. Teach us to ay to the tempter: Get behind me... e Lord my God is my life. He alone ill open the path of joy and also of nthusiasm" (enthusiasm = to be aken hold of by God).

2. Even in our wounds, God makes n inner life grow. The Holy Spirit omes to burn life's sorrows in the fire f his presence. "Your sadness will hange to joy...and that joy no one hall take from you" (John 16.22).

3. cf. Psalm 84.7 If every morning, pon waking, we could say to God imply: In me, you want a springtime f the heart.

Are you going to reply with a "yes" for the whole of your life? Or will you resign yourself to hesitations without end?

But as you seek to follow Christ Jesus, could it be that you find yourself alone, cast into a kind of human desert, without anyone with whom you can share the trust of faith?

The Risen One comes to wrest you away from loneliness by letting you rely on the trusting of his witnesses, from Mary and the Apostles up to those of today. So this can be your prayer: "Lord Christ, enable me to be alive in this Mystery of communion that is the Church; [14] enable me day after day to dispose myself inwardly to place my trust in the Mystery of Faith. O Christ, do not look on my sins, but on the faith of your Church." [15]

What you were not able to accomplish all alone becomes possible in this communion... and the holiness of Christ is no longer out of reach, it is quite close to you... within you. [16]

Where does it overflow, the wellspring of a holiness that is quite simple, offered to everyone ? [17] First and foremost, in the unfailing goodness of a human heart. [18] It touches the depths of the soul, it renews its innocence.

The unfailing goodness of a human heart: trust that pierces our dark nights like lightning, fullness [19] of an unselfish love, inward fire of kindness.

God, too radiant to be seen, makes himself visible, yes visible, through the communion in the Body of Christ, his Church.

When this communion is rendered transparent by reconciliations, by forgiveness, by the struggle to love, there is nothing left in it to veil the reflection on human faces of the face of the Risen Christ. The Holy Spirit keeps watch within you: a shaft of light into the dark nights. And the doors of a communion open up... Will you seek there the vitality to keep you in solidarity with the wounds of the human family?... Do not be afraid, trust is at hand, and with it a happiness.

14. How could we take Christ in isolation, without his Body? His fullness is found in a communion: the Church is the fullness of Christ. She is the Christ of communion. How can we follow him if we remain unreconciled, keeping well away from one another, moving along parallel tracks and contenting ourselves with occasional meetings? Under such conditions it is impossible to plant a seed of reconciliation in the soil of the human family.

15. "The parish is becoming a dynamic community of communities, a center where movements, basic ecclesial communities and other apostolic groups energize it and are in turn nourished. In the Eucharistic celebration, the centre of all Christian life, the faithful become especially united with Christ and are sent to the service of the world." (Synod 1987) Whoever approches the Eucharist with the simplicity of a child's heart comes to understand, little by little, that Christ is present in fullness there. It can sometimes happen that people find themselves in a situation where they do not have the possibility of receiving the Eucharist. In the plan of God, the Church has a mother's heart... She is present in the midst of humanity to understand the most varied human situations. Rather than becoming tense over what is impossible, why cannot blessed bread be given, at the end of the celebration, following an ancient tradition of the Church? Without replacing the eucharistic communion proper, the blessed bread is a symbol of fraternal sharing.

16. "Christ has made perfect forever those who are being made holy" (Hebrews 10.14).

17. "In our times the thrist for holiness grows more and more in the hearts of the faithful, when they accept the call of God inviting them to live with Christ and to change the world." (Synod 1987)

18. "You become the likeness of God as you acquire kindness. Fashion yourself a merciful and kind heart so as to clothe yourself with Christ" (Saint Basil, 4th century).

19. The hand hesitates to write the word "fullness". Words can be so clumsy. May they not be hurtful to those who find them difficult to understand...

A pilgrimage of trust on earth

So as to seek to be bearers of peace, of reconciliation, of sharing, in the different situations of our time, for some years now we have been making a "pilgrimage of trust on earth" with young adults from all the continents.

Those who have been to Taizé or to one of the European Meetings wonder how to continue when they get home. They know that it is in their own city or village that it is necessary to open up ways of reconciliation and to make of their own lives a pilgrimage of trust.

They are all asking themselves the question: How can we lead lives of simplicity and of sharing?

During the intercontinental meetings, all through the Summer of 1987, we saw a cloud of witnesses: young people from every continent who have not given up, who have stood firm, even in extreme situations.

Some people are striving to live very simply, to keep their homes welcoming. Others have chosen to work to acquire qualifications, or to work in the service of the poor, foreigners, children, in a word, in the service of those who have been rejected.

Still others have discovered, close by their own homes, the great solitude of old people who live alone and they go to visit them. Who will keep company with those who have no one?

Many people are seeking through their own commitment to make their Christian community a place of listening and reconciliation, of celebration in prayer. They understand that parishes are called to become "a dynamic community of communities, a center where movements, basic ecclesial communities and other apostolic groups energize it and are in turn nourished." (Synod 1987) □

An urgent appeal for Ethiopia

Some religious sisters, who are already accomplishing exceptional work for the very poor in Ethiopia, asked Brother Roger to pass on this appeal to people in Europe: for them to pray for Ethiopia and also for them to send help for two urgent objectives:

- relief for the victims of the approaching famine, because 1988 will be a hard year in Ethiopia.
- support for destitute families who have been struck by illness, especially leprosy: $300 is sufficient to support a whole family for a year.

Gifts can be sent to the following addresses: UK: "Operation Hope", Bank Account no. 44495090, Coutts and Co., Duncannon Branch, 440 Strand, LONDON WC2R 0QS. • USA: "Operation Hope", c/o Taizé, 413 W. 48th Street, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10036. • IRELAND, CANADA, AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND, SOUTH AFRICA, etc.: gifts can be sent in the same way as sums for subscriptions to the Letter from Taizé, making sure to indicate with your payment "for Operation Hope".

1988 OOOOO

Intercontinental meetings and new evangelisation

20th March to 6th November 33 intercontinental meetings

Last year, through the Summer of 1987, a series of intercontinental meetings made it possible for youth from 97 nationalities to meet together in Taizé.

These meetings could not have taken place without time to mature. They are based on long years of exchanges, of coming and going on all five continents : it is seventeen years ago that the first intercontinental teams were formed in Taizé.

What was lived in 1987 will develop further in 1988 and beyond. 33 intercontinental meetings, each lasting one week, Sunday to Sunday, will take place in Taizé from 20th March to 6th November.

During these meetings, youth from Eastern and Western Europe will be able to come together with young Christians from every continent, from the indigenous regions of southern Mexico to Japan, and from Zaire to the different States of India.

Every day, in two marquees, youth from the southern continents welcome the other young people. The exchanges make it possible to discover that even in the most troubled regions of the world, Haiti, Chile, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, South Africa, Lebanon,... young Christians pray, commit their lives, and seek to be witnesses of trust on the earth. In this way, youth from the five continents can together go deeply into the interior life and human solidarity.

Welcoming the young people from the southern continents is possible with limited means. With the help of their parishes, young Europeans take care of travel costs, often showing much imagination and effort.

After a time of preparation in Taizé, the young people from the southern continents go off in twos and threes, accompanied by young Europeans, to spend several weeks in parishes in Europe. Coming as they do from countries where the faith of young people is often more alive, they are participating, through a new evangelisation of Europe, in the birth of a springtime of the Church. □

MESSAGE OF POPE JOHN PAUL II TO THE EUROPEAN MEETING OF YOUNG ADULTS IN ROME

The evening of December 30th, Saint Peter's Basilica was filled to overflowing, packed with 30,000 young people, for the prayer with Pope John Paul II. At the end of the prayer, Brother Roger addressed the Pope: "Welcomed by nearly all the parishes of Rome, we are here to love the Church of Rome which presides in love through your ministry of universal pastor, indicating the wellsprings of a common faith.(...) Dear Holy Father, when you came to Taizé in October 1986, you set our hearts free when, among other things, you said to us: "Although you did not look for it, you have seen young people from everywhere come to you by the thousands.... One passes through Taizé as one passes close to a spring of water." Many young people, attentive to the Church, know that in vast regions of Europe, Christ is being abandoned in the Mystery of Communion that is the Church. For centuries, the Gospel has been communicated mainly from Europe. This year, it appeared essential that young Christians from the Southern continents come to bring the Gospel in its freshness to us in Europe by visiting, in the company of young Europeans, those "communities of communities" which are the parishes and the small communities of young workers and students linked to them. And all of us, what are we preparing ourselves for? For a springtime of the Church, in Europe and elsewhere.(...)" Then John Paul II spoke:

Thank you, dear Brother Roger, for your words full of trust and hope in God and in the young. You know, it is because I share that trust and that hope that I wanted to stop in Taizé during my pastoral visit to France last year.

These days, dear young people, you are the ones stopping in Rome during your "pilgrimage of trust on earth". You have chosen to stop here, to meet with the Pope and the faithful of his diocese, and to pray with them in these places where the apostles Peter and Paul and many other martyrs shed their blood out of faithfulness to Christ. It is a joy and an encouragement for us to receive so many of you, and to benefit from the enthusiasm of your youth and your faith, at this time when we are preparing a diocesan synod to discover more deeply the meaning of the communion and the mission we have received from the Lord Jesus.

Dear young people, dear pilgrims of trust, welcome in the name of the Lord!

The Pope feels deeply involved with you in this "pilgrimage of trust on earth". Like you, I too am constantly anguished to see that Christians are not all united in the full communion of faith and charity, to know that thousands of human beings suffer and die from famine or horrible armed conflicts between nations, to realize that human rights, and in particular religious freedom, are still often flouted in many places on earth, to listen to the voices of so many young people worried about their personal future and that of humanity.

I know that all these cares are your own as well, but at the same time I know that you possess a certainty that procures an indefectible hope: we believe that Christ accompanies us on the road of our whole life and that his mysterious presence is like a fire that never dies away.

It is present in the depths of every man and every woman, even if, too often, the ashes of fear and egotism keep the flame from rising and the fire from radiating its heat.

To be a pilgrim of trust in Christ, it is indispensable to undertake each day an inner pilgrimage within ourselves, seeking the light of Christ, journeying toward the person Jesus who, in the peace of prayer, makes himself a pilgrim with us. As we meditate on his Word, we are able to understand to what extent he loves us. We become aware at the same time that he is not alone, that we can and must love him in the Body of which he is the Head, as Saint Paul affirms (cf. Col 1.18). This body is the Church, whose members we become by baptism, in which the love of Christ unites and nourishes us through the Word of God and the sacraments. We also become capable of understanding that Christ sends us forth to proclaim the Good News to others, that is, to all people, since he is the friend and the Lord of all men and all women and, as a result, seeks their salvation.

To welcome Christ who loves us; to love Christ in the communion of love which is the Church; to make ourselves available to Christ who sends us to our brothers and sisters: these are three basic attitudes so that we may undertake a pilgrimage of trust on this earth, enlightened by the one whom the Prophet hailed as "the sun of justice" (Mal 3.20). For this reason, some of you travel from one continent to another and cover great distances. But all of you can be pilgrims of trust in the places where you live, where you work or study, within your families and in your parishes. Remember Jesus' words: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid" (John 14.27). In communion with the Church, it is your task to act in the places where you are, for the sake of reconciliation and sharing, to build peace, in order to fight against injustices and in order to alleviate suffering.

So that I may serve faith and unity among Christians and be a messenger of peace in the world, I too am called to be a pilgrim of trust in the name of Christ. I ask you to pray for me, for my ministry in the Diocese of Rome and in the whole Church, especially during my pastoral journeys. Be assured that I pray for you so that you may be faithful and courageous pilgrims, in Christ's name.

In this period of the feasts of Christmas and the Epiphany of the Lord, following the shepherds and the wise men, let us go together as pilgrims, in spirit, with all the Christians of the world to Bethlehem, to contemplate and to reflect the mystery of the birth of the Son of God in the poverty of the manger. Confronted with the weakness of the Divine Infant, we become able to accept our own weakness; we manage to understand that Christ comes to it, brings spiritual growth and manifests his power, according to the words of the Apostle, "my power is perfected in weakness" (2 Cor 12.9). And our joy becomes "a joy that words cannot express" (1 Peter 1.9); our trust is strengthened. Like the Mother of God, we wish to bring to the world the Good News of Him who receives us and whom we receive. We desire to be faithful pilgrims on this earth.

Dear young friends, our world has such a great need of hope and trust, of reconciliation, of unity and of peace!

I wish with all my heart that, seeing your life, this world may not cease to listen to and understand better and better the angels' song, heard in the night of Christmas: "Glory to God in highest heaven and peace on earth to those He loves" (Luke 2.14),

Lord Jesus, give us trust in your Word!
Give us the strength of your love!
Give us the joy to be brothers and sisters of all!

ohannine ours

enesis 50.15-21

After having been mistreated d sold as a slave in Egypt by s own brothers, Joseph be- me, thanks to a whole series of ents, the chief administrator of haroah's court. During a famine hich ravaged many countries, oseph had so well organised gypt's food stocks that people me from all over to purchase pplies.

Thus one day his brothers ood before him. Should he ake them feel all the weight of e evil they had done so that they ould never do such a thing gain? Or else could it be possi- e to repay evil with goodness? fter a long struggle in himself nd anxious waiting by his others, a reconciliation was ac- mplished. Joseph's whole fam- came to settle in Egypt and us were saved.

But since the evil done to oseph was so great, his brothers ill feared the consequences 0.15-18). And so Joseph xplained to them the basis of re- onciliation: "Do not be afraid! m I in God's place? The evil hich you intended to do to me as been turned to good by od's will" (50.19-20)...and he ays that they are all alive thanks what has happened. Forgiving, r Joseph, means not hindering od's plan of love but giving all ne's strength to it.

How can I be a peacemaker in tuations where the evil which as been done is likely to cause istrust, fear and discourage- ent?
an I trust that God, who by the esurrection transformed Christ's uffering into life for the world, will rn what has hurt me to good?

Letter from Taizé

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Meditating on the word

These short readings, taken from the midday prayer in Taizé, can be read several times during the day. The references indicate longer readings. If you have time to read only one, the one in bold type is suggested.

March

1 Tue — **2 Timothy 2.8-13** / Mark 11.27-33
Jeremiah said: You know me Lord and you see me. You know that my heart is with you.
Jeremiah 11.19; 12.1-3a

2 Wed — Jr 14.7-9 / 2 Tm 2.14-24
The stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone: this is the Lord's doing. **Mk 12.1-12**

3 Thu — Jr 14.19-22 Mk 12.13-17 / **2 Tm 3.10-17**
Our faults overwhelm us, Lord, but you blot them out. Ps 65

4 Fri — Jr 15.11-21 / Mk 12.26-34
Paul writes to Timothy: Proclaim the Word, in season and out of season. **2 Tm 4.1-8**

5 Sat — Jr 17.5-8
When he saw a widow putting two small coins into the temple treasury, Jesus said: In truth, this widow who is poor has given more than all the others. For they have all put in money they could spare, but she has put in everything she possessed. **Mk 12.41-44**

6 SUN — 1 Corinthians 1.22-25 / John 2.13-25
On Mount Sinai God, said: I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of slavery. You shall have no other gods but me. **Exodus 20.1-17**

7 Mon — **2 Tm 4.16-18** / Mk 13.1-8
Heal me Lord, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved, for you are my praise.
Jr 17.14-17

8 Tue — Jr 18.1-6 / Hebrews 1.1-3
Jesus said to his disciples: When you are taken to be handed over, do not worry about what you will say; no, say whatever is given you when the time comes, because it is not you who will be speaking; it is the Holy Spirit. **Mk 13.9-11,13**

9 Wed — Jr 18.18-20 / Mk 13.26-31
Since Christ himself suffered he is able to help those who are suffering trials. **Heb 2.10-18**

10 Thu — Jr 20.7-9 / Mk 13.32-37
Keep encouraging one another every day, so that none of you be hardened by the lure of sin. For we have been granted a share in Christ if we hold firmly to the hope we had at the first. **Heb 3.5-14**

11 Fri — Heb 4.12-16 / **Mk 14.1-9**
The Lord says: Act rightly and justly; free the oppressed from the grasp of their oppressors. Jr 22.1-3

12 Sat — Jr 23.1-6
Jesus said: I am the gate. Anyone who enters through me will be safe: they will go in and out, and will find pasture. **Jn 10.1-10**

13 SUN — Ephesians 2.4-10 / **Jn 3.14-21**
The Lord said to Samuel: Do not look at his appearance, for God does not see as human beings see; they look at appearances but God looks at the heart. 1 Sam 16.1-7

14 Mon — Jr 29.11-14 / Jn 10.11-15
God has given us great encouragement to grasp the hope which is held out to us. It is an anchor for our souls. **Heb 6.10-20**

15 Tue — Heb 7.22-25 / **Jn 10.16-21**
The Lord says: I will restore you to health and heal your wounds, and there will be thanksgiving and shouts of joy. Jr 30.12-13,17-19

16 Wed — Jr 31.3-6 / Heb 10.22-25
Jesus said: My sheep listen to my voice; I give them eternal life, they will never be lost. No one can steal anything from the Father's hand. **Jn 10.22-30**

17 Thu — Jr 31.8-9 / Jn 11.1-16
Remember those earlier days when, after having been illuminated by the light of faith, you stood your ground in the face of great suffering. You accepted with joy being stripped of your possessions because you knew that you had better and lasting possessions. **Heb 10.32-38a**

18 Fri — Jr 31.11-13 / Jn 11.17-27
By faith, Abraham answered God's call and set out for a land that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he set out without knowing where he was going. **Heb 11.1-10**

19 Sat — Jn 11.28-44
The Lord says: My people is so dear to me that whenever I speak of them I remember them lovingly. Therefore my heart yearns for them and has compassion on them. **Jr 31.15-20**

20 SUN — Jr 31.31-34 / Heb 5.7-9
Jesus said: In truth, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains only a single grain; but if it dies it yields a rich harvest. **Jn 12.20-23**

21 Mon — Heb 11.13-16 / Jn 11.45-53
The Lord says: I will refresh the weary and satisy the hungry. **Jr 31.23-25**

22 Tue — Jr 32.38-41 / Jn 12.1-11
With so many witnesses in a great cloud around us, let us throw off everything that weighs us down and the sin that clings so closely, to run with perseverance the race which is marked out for us, keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus who leads us in our faith and brings it to perfection. **Heb 11.35b-12.3**

23 Wed — Jr 33.2-3,6-8 / Jn 12.12-19
Make level paths for your steps. Seek peace with all people. **Heb 12.12-15**

24 Thu — Jr 33.14-16 / Heb 12.28-13.8
Jesus said: When I am lifted up from the earth, I shall draw all people to me. **Jn 12.26-32**

25 Fri — Heb 13.12-21 / Jn 12.35-43
Elizabeth said to Mary: Blessed is she who believed that the promise made her by the Lord would be fulfilled. **Luke 1.39-45**

26 Sat — Isaiah 53.1-5
Jesus said: The Father who sent me commanded me what to say and what to make known; and I know that his commands lead to eternal life. **Jn 12.44-50**

27 SUN — Zechariah 9.9-10 / Philippians 2.6-11
PALM SUNDAY
Jesus enterd Jerusalem, and those who walked in front and those who followed shouted: Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Blessed is the Kingdom which is coming! **Mk 11.1-10**

28 Mon — Mk 14.43-72
Jesus said: Watch and pray so as not to enter into temptation. **Mk 14.26-42**

29 Tue — Mk 15.1-25
On the cross, Jesus said in a loud voice: My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? **Mk 15.26-47**

30 Wed — Lk 23.33-49
Jesus said to Pilate: I came into the world to bear witness to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me. **Jn 18.28-40**

31 Thu — Mt 26.17-29 / 1 Co 11.23-26
Jesus said to his disciples: If I, who am Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. **Jn 13.1-15**

April

Meditating on the word

These short readings, taken from the midday prayer in Taizé, can be read several times during the day. The references indicate longer readings. If you have time to read only one, the one in bold type is suggested.

1 Fri Jean 19.1-16
GOOD FRIDAY
On the cross, Jesus said, "It is fulfilled"; and bowing his head he gave up his spirit. **Jn 19.17-42**

2 Sat Job 19.25-26, Mt 27.62-66
In the body Christ was put to death, in the Spirit he was raised to life and went to announce the good news to those who, long ago, had refused to believe.
1 Peter 3.18-22

3 SUN **Jn 20.1-10**, Jn 20.19-23
EASTER DAY
Set your hearts on things that are above, not on earthly things. For you have died and now the life you have is hidden with Christ in God.
Colossians 3.1-4

4 Mon Acts 2.22-28, **Luke 24.13-27**
Paul writes: The hope which you heard in the Gospel is growing and bearing fruit throughout the world.
Col 1.1-6

5 Tue Acts 2.42-47, Col 1.9-14
Having recognised the Risen Christ, the two disciples returned from Emmaus to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven who said to them, "It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon!" **Lk 24.28-34**

6 Wed Acts 3.1-10, Jn 1.35-42
God wanted all his fullness to dwell in Christ and through him to reconcile all things to himself.
Col 1.15-20

7 Thu Acts 3.13-21, Jn 1.43-51
Paul writes: Persevere, standing firmly on the solid base of faith, without drifting away from the hope promised by the Gospel.
Col 1.21-23

8 Fri Acts 4.1-4, Col 1.24-29
The Risen Christ said to Mary of Magdala: Go and find my brothers and tell them: I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God. **Jn 20.11-18**

9 Sat Acts 4.13-22, **Jn 2.1-11**
Happy are they who find their strength in you, Lord. As they pass through the valley of tears they make it a place of living springs.
Ps 85

10 SUN 1 Jn 5.1-6, Jn 20.24-31
The whole body of believers was one in heart and soul. No one claimed personal ownership of their possessions, but they shared everything they had. **Acts 4.32-35**

11 Mon Ezekiel 1.28-2.5, Jn 2.13-22
Paul writes: My purpose is that they be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may know the mystery of God, namely Christ. **Col 2.1-5**

12 Tue Col 2.6-10, Jn 3.1-8
God said to Ezekiel: Son of man, take to heart everything I say to you, listen carefully, then go to your exiled countrymen and speak to them. **Ez 3.10-18**

13 Wed Ez 11.17-20, Col 2.12-14
God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that whoever believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. **Jn 3.13-17**

14 Thu Ez 16.60-63, Jn 21.1-14
Paul writes: Exterior rules are only the shadow of what is to come: the reality is the body of Christ.
Col 2.16-23

15 Fri Col 3.8-11, Jn 21.15-17
The Lord says: I take no pleasure in the death of anyone. Change your life and live! **Ez 18.27-32**

16 Sat Jn 21.18-25
The Lord says: I will take care of my flock. I shall look for the lost sheep, bring back the stray, bandage the injured and strengthen the sick. I shall watch over the one that is healthy and strong. I shall be a true shepherd to them.
Ez 34.11-16

17 SUN Acts 3.13-19, 1 Jn 2.1-5
The Risen Christ stood among his disciples and said: Peace be with you! **Lk 24.35-48**

18 Mon Ez 34.22-31, Jn 3.22-36a
Bear with one another and forgive whatever grievances you have against one another. The Lord has forgiven you; do the same in your turn. **Col 3.12-17**

19 Tue Ez 36.25-28, Jn 4.1-14
Persevere in prayer, being watchful and thankful. **Col 4.2-6**

20 Wed Ez 37.12-14, James 1.1-6
Jesus said: Anyone who drinks the water I give will never be thirsty again. The water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.
Jn 4.14-24

21 Thu Ez 37.23-28, Jn 4.25-34
Let no one say when they tempted, "God is tempting me." For God does not tempt anyone.
Jm 1.12-17

22 Fri Ez 47.1-12, Jn 4.35-42
Let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, for human anger does not fulfill the justice of God.
Jm 1.18-21

23 Sat Lk 24.1-12
Daniel said: May God be blessed for ever and ever. He reveals depths and mysteries, and light dwells with him. **Daniel 2.20-22**

24 SUN Acts 4.8-12, Jn 10.11-18
We are already God's children. What we shall be in the future has not yet been revealed, but we know that we shall be like him because we shall see him as he really is. **1 Jn 3.1-2**

25 Mon 1 Peter 5.5b-14, Jn 4.46-53
ST MARK
Jesus sent the disciples out saying: Go into the whole world and proclaim the Gospel to all creation. **Mark 16.15-20**

26 Tue Dn 3.23-26,46-50, Jn 5.1-9
James writes: Put the Word into practice; do not just listen to it.
Jm 1.22-25

27 Wed Jm 2.1-5, Jn 5.19-23
Daniel said: Bless the Lord, faithful and humble-hearted people, praise and glorify him for ever! His love is everlasting.
Dn 3.51-52,85-89

28 Thu Dn 6.27-28, Jm 2.12-16,26
Jesus said: I tell you, the one who listens to my words and believes in the one who sent me has eternal life. **Jn 5.24-29a**

29 Fri Dn 7.13-14, Jm 3.4-5,7-11
Jesus said: I seek to do not my own will, but the will of the one who sent me. **Jn 5.30-37a**

30 Sat Matthew 28.1-8
Daniel prayed saying: Listen to the prayer of your servant. For we rely not on our good deeds but on your great mercy. **Dn 9.17-19**

Johannine Hours

Luke 2.41-50

Johannine hours are suggested as a way of seeking God in silence and prayer, in the midst of our life at home. During the course of the day (if possible, two days in the same week) take a couple of hours to read the Bible passages with the short commentary and to reflect on the questions which follow. Afterwards, the group (3 to 10 people) meet together to share what they have discovered and perhaps for a time of prayer.

After a pilgrimage t Jerusalem, Jesus, still a chil remains in the Temple witho saying anything to his parent When his parents eventual discover him they are upse His mother particularly is hu within by what their son ha done to them and she speak to him about it.

Later on too, Jesus' attitud is difficult for his mother. Isn there a sudden, brusque dis tance between them at th wedding in Cana (John 2.4-5) And Jesus' death on a cross which he has not tried to avoi — will that not be like a swor that pierces Mary's soul (L 2.35)?

In her hurt, Mary has — hu manly speaking — to forgiv Jesus, who without havin done wrong has nevertheles given her suffering. At ever moment Jesus follows the wa of God. Mary, who is plunge into the pain of a distancing sh cannot understand, does no say, "That's enough. I can tak no more!" She remains with he son. She forgives, even thoug there has been nothing evil i the actions of Jesus which hav upset her.

When can I be hurt by some thing which is not necessaril bad, but which I do not unde stand?
In which situations is it neces sary to forgive even when ther is no question of blamin others — like Mary who is hu by Jesus' actions though h has not done wrong?